



# EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AND THEIR IMPACT ON BEHAVIOUR OF AN INDIVIDUAL

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## ABSTRACT

Human development passes through different stages like Infancy, Childhood, Adolescence and Adulthood. All the stages have a contributory factor to our growth and development. Childhood is the second developmental stage of our life. It is divided into early childhood and later childhood stage. During the childhood stage the child learns specially from the surroundings. The present writing is an attempt to point out the surroundings which have their impact on behaviour of an individual. This text sheds light on various environmental conditions which affect the behaviour of an individual or which are responsible for future character building of an adult. A good and healthy environment makes a mentally healthy person and an unhealthy surrounding contributes to mental ill-health.

**KEYWORDS:** Behaviour, Childhood, Mental Health, Surroundings

## INTRODUCTION

Childhood is one of the important developmental stages of human life. This is the stage when rapid growth and development takes place. It is that stage of life when the child starts learning about the formal behaviour, formal discipline and formal lessons etc. Again, in the later childhood stage most of the children become unruliness and awful. The child needs proper guidance and care at this stage because, up to a great extent the early childhood experiences forms the behavior of an individual. The rapid growth and development especially mental growth and development during early childhood, generates the neural pathways that determine how we regulate our emotions, social skills and thinking ability. The environment in which they grow the interactions they have and the experiences they undergo during this formative period significantly influence their behaviours, personalities and emotional regulation. Therefore, it becomes crucial for the parents, educators and all to understand the impact of early childhood experiences to foster healthier societies. A healthy and positive environment develops the positive attitude among children. On the other hand the circumstances which are impermissible and painful have an adverse effect on mental health of the children and it forms the bases of behavioural problems in adulthood.

### Environment affecting future behavior of an individual:

Some of the important aspects that affect future behaviour of an individual are discussed below—

- In the childhood stage if the child experience stable and caring relationship they will develop a secure attachment with the surroundings. This secure attachment will develop a balanced emotional behaviour, balanced social skills and overall well-being. Children from nurturing environments often display empathy, cooperation and communication skills. These kids often grow up to be more confident, better at making friends and more in tune with their emotions. Again, an insecure attachment will develop

mistrust, jealousy, hatred etc among the children. It can also cause anxiety, difficulty in forming relationships and various behavioural problems like aggression, withdrawal, dissatisfaction etc.

- In the childhood stage the child learns from their surroundings. They need proper care and love from the adults. Children receiving affection, attention and validation from their surroundings will develop a positive self-concept and self esteem. On the other hand children receiving neglected or unwanted environment from the surroundings will lead to anxiety, depression, low confidence, low self concept and anti-social behavior.
- Children who brought up in an environment that encourage curiosity and learning will enhance their cognitive development and behavioural adaptability. Early learning experiences correlate with motivation, attention and perseverance. Supportive and firm environment usually leads to well-balanced, self confident children. Lack of all these may result developmental hazards, low academic achievement and mal-adjustment.
- Children coming from faithful and motivating environment will influence the development of maturity and achievement motivation. As for example, parent's faith in their child's academic success influences the child's success and motivates to excel. When parents have belief that their child is going to succeed, then the child becomes more confident and it inspires them to be focused on success. As a result the child achieves higher success and becomes well adjusted.
- A healthy, happy and gratifying relationship between the family members contributes to a balanced personality of the children. Early exposure to environment such as domestic violence, abuse, poverty etc can lead to behavioural problems like aggression, depression, frustration, learning difficulties etc.
- A free and supportive family environment allows the

child to fully explore all the options coming to him, it makes them self disciplined and develops decision taking capacity in life. It also develops children's self concept and self esteem. Opposite to such type of environment the child becomes lack of confidence and dependent to others for taking their decisions in future life.

- Children coming from strict and controlling environment; often results in obedience but they possess low self esteem and happiness. Even they may lack the decision taking capacity, problem solving ability etc.

## CONCLUSION

Early childhood experiences are not just fleeting moments. They are the blue print of our future character building. Those early experiences reflect throughout our lives and shapes accordingly.

Therefore, showing up for children with love, patients and care is one of the most powerful things anyone can do. Because behind every well-adjusted adult was once a child who was nurtured, encouraged and allowed to grow into their best self.

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